

## VA Hospital Receives \$20 Million For New Employees

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Jerry Soto and his wife were homeless before they came to the Veteran Affairs Medical Center.

"They helped me out. I started my life, to rebuild my life again," Soto said.

Soto says leaving the army was not easy for him or his wife, but now the two are buying a home in New York.

"We're going to buy 3 acres up there and start living our life," Soto said.

Soto says his experience with the VA Hospital has been life-changing. A new influx of money could help transform more lives.

20 million dollars has been given to the hospital as part of the Veteran's Access, Choice and Accountability Act.

The bill is the result of a scandal involving dozens of veterans who died waiting for health care at various facilities across the country.

The money will go to hire 86 new employees, including specialty doctors.

While the hospital's wait times for primary care and mental health are well below the national average, their wait times for specialty care were twice the national average.

"It helps bring in some more staff which sometimes I think they're understaffed," said Veteran David Jenner.

David Jenner served in the Gulf War, now he suffers from PTSD.

"Sometimes I'd wake up in a cold sweat, and some dreams sometimes," Jenner said.

He said he's excited to see what this new funding will do for him and other veterans. He says he doesn't know where he'd be without the hospital.

"Who knows. I couldn't tell you. It wouldn't be here I'll tell you that. It might be bad," Jenner said.

The funding also provide veterans with The Choice Program, a national program that will allow those who have to wait longer than 30 days for care to seek care from a third party provider.

As for the new hires, 30 employees will be recruited this year, the remaining 56 will be added next year.